

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image output method adopted in an image output device that is equipped with an output processing module, said output processing module having multi-stage processing units 5 with a preset processing sequence and activating at least a last-stage processing unit among the multi-stage processing units to set image data to output data and to implement output of an image, said image output method comprising the steps of:

(a) receiving image data;

10 (b) identifying type of the received image data; and

(c) assigning a specific-stage processing unit adequate for the identified type of the received image data, among the multi-stage processing units, to process the received image data.

15 2. An image output method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said output processing module comprises a color conversion processing unit, as one of the multi-stage processing units, which carries out a series of processing including a conversion process of converting a predetermined 20 color system of the received image data into a color system for output and outputs resulting processed image data to a subsequent-stage processing unit, and

when the type of the received image data identified in

said step (b) shows that the received image data has the predetermined color system, said step (c) assigns the color conversion processing unit to process the received image data.

3. An image output method in accordance with claim 2,
5 wherein the predetermined color system is RGB color system,
and the color system for output is CMY color system.

4. An image output method in accordance with claim 2,
wherein the color conversion processing unit is actualized by
an exclusive hardware structure.

10 5. An image output method in accordance with claim 2,
wherein said output processing module comprises an extension
processing unit that makes compressed image data in a
predetermined format subjected to a preset series of extension
processing and outputs resulting extended image data to the
15 color conversion processing unit, and

when the type of the received image data identified in
said step (b) shows that the received image data is compressed
image data in the predetermined format, said step (c) assigns
the extension processing unit to process the received image
20 data.

6. An image output method in accordance with claim 1,
wherein said output processing module comprises an analyzer
processing unit, as one of the multi-stage processing units,

which carries out a series of processing including an analysis process of analyzing a description file described in a selected page description language and outputs resulting processed image data to a subsequent-stage processing unit, and

5 when the type of the received image data identified in said step (b) shows that the received image data is a description file described in the selected page description language, said step (c) assigns the analyzer processing unit to process the received image data.

10 7. An image output method in accordance with claim 6, wherein the selected page description language is a predetermined markup language.

15 8. An image output method in accordance with claim 6, wherein the selected page description language is a predetermined script language.

19 9. An image output method in accordance with claim 6, wherein said image output device is constructed to be connectable via a specific communication interface with a broadcasting receiver device that receives broadcast data sent 20 from a broadcast station, and

 said step (a) receives input of the description file, which is created based on the broadcast data received by said broadcasting receiver device, via the communication interface.

10. An image output method in accordance with claim 1,
wherein said output processing module comprises, as the
last-stage processing unit, an image output execution unit that
executes output of an image based on the output data, and

5 when the type of the received image data identified in
said step (b) shows that the image data is the output data,
said step (c) assigns the image output execution unit to process
the image data.

11. An image output method in accordance with claim 1,
10 wherein said image output device is constructed to be
connectable via a specific communication interface with
multiple different image input devices that input image data,
and

 said step (a) receives image data from each of the
15 multiple different image input devices via the communication
interface.

12. An image output method in accordance with claim 11,
wherein said step (b) acquires type data representing the type
of the received image data, in response to reception of the
20 image data from one of said multiple different image input
devices via the communication interface, and identifies the
type of the received image data based on the acquired type data.

13. An image output method in accordance with claim 1,

wherein said image output device is a printing device

14. An image output method in accordance with claim 13,
wherein the printing device is an inkjet printer.

15. An image output device that outputs an image, said
5 image output device comprising:

an output processing module that has multi-stage
processing units with a preset processing sequence and
activates at least a last-stage processing unit among the
multi-stage processing units to set image data to output data
10 in an allowable form by said image output device and to
implement output of an image;

an image data receiving module that receives image data;
an image data type identification module that identifies
type of the received image data; and

15 a processing assignment module that assigns a
specific-stage processing unit adequate for the identified
type of the received image data, among the multi-stage
processing units, to process the received image data.

16. A storage medium storing therein a program, which
20 causes a computer to function as an image output device in
accordance with claim 15.